

White Paper

for

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“Humanities Open Book Program – Cornell University III”

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Grantee Institution: Cornell University

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I. Project Activities

With the opening of an additional twenty-five out-of-print backlist titles now available digitally worldwide, the NEH Humanities Open Book Program at Cornell University Press totals 102 books. With those NEH funded open books at the core, the Press has now published 150 open access titles to commemorate its 150-year anniversary. Cornell Open, the Press's in-house open access platform, provides worldwide access to high-quality humanities and social sciences scholarship — and continues to fulfill the land grant mission of Cornell University in demonstrating openness, public accessibility, and the dissemination of reliable knowledge. We are grateful to the National Endowment for the Humanities for its assistance in providing the foundation upon which Cornell Open continues to grow. It stands as one of the finest publishing achievements in the long history of Cornell University Press.

Cornell Open has revitalized the strengths of the Press's acquisitions portfolio from the last half century. John Ackerman, Fran Benson, Roger Haydon, Bernie Kendler, and their editorial colleagues acquired groundbreaking texts that built the Press's reputation for quality. Three NEH Humanities Open Book Program grants have reinforced the importance of their vision in the shaping of disciplines such as Anthropology, Classics, German Studies, Literary Criticism, Medieval History, Political Science, Russian Studies and Women's Studies. The grants have fostered the strengthening of the Press's relationships with authors, faculty, Library colleagues, e-book aggregation partners and academic departments at Cornell University. Cornell Open has expanded the Press's e-book digitization efforts and enabled the development of workflows critical to the creation of digital collections across multiple platforms.

On March 15, 2019, the Press's third NEH Humanities Open Book Program grant allowed for publication of 25 additional out-of-print titles in Classics, Medieval Studies, and Science Education as OA digital editions. These digital editions were loaded onto Cornell Open, Project MUSE, JSTOR, Amazon, Ingram's CoreSource, University Press Scholarship Online (UPS), DeGruyter, eBrary, Bookshare, Proquest, Redshelf, EBSCO, Library of Congress and other distributors. Since 2016, Cornell's NEH funded open access Press monographs on JSTOR and Project MUSE alone have been used at over 12,000 institutions in more than 200 countries.

For those who prefer physical paper editions, and as an extra incentive to our authors for their participation in the open access program, Cornell University Press also offers print-on-demand paperback versions of each OA title for sale for the low price of \$9.95. Paperbacks for this third-round of NEH OA titles are slated for publication this fall.

Feedback from authors participating in the Humanities Open Book Program has been positive. The following note from a Medieval Studies author whose work is included among the 25 OA titles published in March, nicely sums up the spirit and intent of the Press's collaboration with the National Endowment for the Humanities Office of Digital Humanities:

“The NEH Cornell Open project is nothing less than a brilliant new platform for the digital age. That *The Idea of the Book in the Middle Ages* will now be as locally accessible as a mouse-click to the Cornell website or Kindle or Amazon fulfills everything I tried to do in that book back in the 1970s and early 1980s when it was in

composition. Next to no one in medieval studies was working with contemporary literary theory in those years, and I knew the time was ready for showing the commonalities between medieval cultural forms and new departures in philosophy and criticism flourishing in French studies. As I set forth the project, however, I had no idea whom I was addressing in my field. I cast my net to a broad readership in the humanities, hoping to interest a venturesome and generous mind. The Cornell Open project now realizes that readership with a wholly new vision for the internet age. I could not have imagined a happier outcome. Thank you, once again, for completing my hopes of making medieval civilization accessible to anyone on the world wide web.” —Jesse Gellrich

Cornell University Press once again divided the NEH Humanities Open Book grant activities into four segments: (1) title identification and selection; (2) rights clearance; (3) scanning and digitization; and (4) launch activities and title discovery.

By this third round of participation in the Humanities Open Book Program we were not expecting to be caught off-guard in our established processes. Of the eleven original science education titles proposed, however, four were retained, seven were dropped, and four replacement titles were selected. This unusually large degree of attrition was mainly due to the fact that for most of the titles in this category, we reached much further back in our publishing history than we had in previous years. All but one of the original ten titles were originally published between 1916 and 1965. Many of these early titles were published by Comstock Publishing Associates before it merged with Cornell University Press. We were unable to locate copies in our archives or on the rare book market at a reasonable price, for three of the five James Needham titles (*General Biology*, *Insect Notes*, and *Guide to the Study of Fresh-Water Biology*) and for Anna Botsford Comstock’s *Trees at Leisure* (a print-on-demand copy of which, scanned from the 1916 edition, proved to be of unacceptable quality). A second Comstock title, *Common Animal Notebook*, a loose-leaf pamphlet designed to be combined with others in the series to provide nature camps with customized workbooks for students, was determined to be unsuitable for digital format. One title was rejected due to concerns that its oversize format would cause conversion problems, and another couldn’t be used because all rights had been reverted to the author and sold to another publisher. The replacement titles, however, preserve the original emphasis on the fruits of the movement to expand life-sciences study beyond the laboratory and define its role in a well-rounded Humanist education, while improving the historical and interdisciplinary aspects of the selection.

Marketing for all NEH OA titles included subject area e-blasts to scholars in the fields of Anthropology, Classics, German Studies, Literary Criticism, Medieval History, Political Science, Russian Studies and Women’s Studies. The Press featured NEH OA-related paperbacks and information on the OA digital editions at multiple academic conferences. We expanded our NEH Humanities Open Book exhibits presence in 2018-19 to include the Medieval Studies Association and the Association for Slavic, East European, & Eurasian Studies — in addition to the Modern Language Association. A section of the exhibit space at these meetings was devoted to the OA program and included a course adoption flyer with a list of NEH OA titles and a selection of paperbacks at a reduced rate. We began marketing the NEH OA titles on the Press’s social media channels to conference attendees to great effect as these efforts resulted in spikes of download activity on the distribution platforms we are able to monitor. Lastly, in what may be a

first, Cornell University Press produced a printed catalog for 93 of its Cornell Open OA titles and distributed them at the academic conferences.

The Press marketed the Humanities Open Books Program directly to librarians who belong to the LYRASIS consortium of 1,200 libraries and the 200-member International Coalition of Licensed Consortia (ICOLC) in Africa, Asia, Australia, Europe, and North and South America. We will continue to customize our communication to this community to ensure that there is awareness of our OA titles for global use in courses and research.

For digital OA dissemination the Press uploaded files to Cornell Open, Project MUSE, JSTOR, Amazon, Ingram's CoreSource, University Press Scholarship Online (UPS), DeGruyter, eBrary, Bookshare, Proquest, Redshelf, EBSCO, Library of Congress and other distributors. Due to software incompatibility we have been unable to resolve issues preventing upload to Hathi Trust and OAPEN.

In addition to the surmounted difficulties with our original list of Science Education titles, it has just come to light that in spite of confirming file delivery to JSTOR and Project MUSE, a breakdown in a manual process involving metadata has resulted in the unavailability of our 25 third round titles on those two platforms. The problem, with roots in a staffing change at the Press, has now been recognized and is being rectified.

II. Accomplishments

The third NEH Digital Humanities grant enabled Cornell University Press to achieve a number of objectives. Here are the major accomplishments:

- Publication of 25 titles within nine and a half months of receiving funding
- Continued validation of a methodology for analyzing and selecting impactful out-of-print and deep backlist titles using a combination of subject area specialists, scholars, circulation data, and citations
- Longterm planning for course adoptions within Cornell University which will yield fruitful feedback for the engagement of other disciplines and institutions
- Greater refinement of the rights clearance workflow established by Karen Laun and Jim McCaffery which will enable further digitization of the Press's out-of-print backlist titles
- The expansion of the Press's Cornell Open OA footprint to include frontlist titles
- Printed catalog of Cornell Open OA titles which will continue to be updated
- Cornell University's institutional funding participation and the Press's participation as a publisher in TOME (Towards an Open Monograph Ecosystem)
- Continued successful collaboration with colleagues in the Cornell University Library

III. Audiences

It's difficult to measure the overall size of the audience for the Press's Cornell Open OA content. The primary audience for Cornell Open includes scholars, post-graduate and undergraduate

students, unaffiliated scholars, and professors and librarians in Anthropology, Classics, German Studies, Literary Criticism and Theory, Medieval History, Political Science, Russian Studies and Women's Studies. The user communities for Project MUSE and JSTOR alone exceed several million and are located in more than 200 countries and we have expanded the number of platforms upon which the Press's OA titles are distributed.

The following table demonstrates increasing usage of Program OA titles across platforms:

	Cornell Open (book downloads)	JSTOR (chapter downloads)	Project MUSE (book downloads)
2017	140	51,433	3,976
2018	3,500	166,029	10,900
2019 – first 6 mos.	16,000	123,084	9,779

Cornell Open

The top three titles from this year's 25 new titles downloaded from Cornell Open:

1. Clover, Carol J.: *The Medieval Saga*
2. Swanson, Judith A.: *The Public and the Private in Aristotle's Political Philosophy*
3. Schleifer, Ronald, Robert Con Davis, and Nancy Mergler: *Culture and Cognition*

The top five Humanities Open Book Program titles downloaded since the inception of Cornell Open:

1. Brantlinger, Patrick: *Bread and Circuses*
2. Siebers, Tobin: *The Ethics of Criticism*
3. McGowan, John: *Democracy's Children*
4. Lionnet, Françoise: *Autobiographical Voices*
5. Reiss, Timothy: *The Discourse of Modernism*

Kindle

Subject rankings of select titles from this year's 25 new NEH OA titles downloaded on Amazon's Kindle:

- Astell, Ann: *Job, Boethius, and Epic Truth* (#2 in Hebrew Bible) and
(#2 in Christian Old Testament Criticism)
- Atkinson, Clarissa: *The Oldest Vocation* (#2 in Gender & Sexuality in Religious Studies)
- Clover, Carol: *The Medieval Saga* (#1 in Medieval Literary Criticism)
- Cooper, Lane: *Louis Agassiz as a Teacher* (#1 in Biographies of Educators)
- Doob, Penelope Reed: *The Idea of the Labyrinth from Classical Antiquity
through the Middle Ages* (#2 in Medieval Literary Criticism)

Farmer, Sharon: *Communities of Saint Martin* (#2 in Christian Saints & Sainthood)
Needham, James: *Life of Inland Waters* (#1 in Ecology of Lakes & Ponds) and
(#1 in Limnology)
Needham, James: *Natural History of the Farm* (#1 in Outdoor & Nature Reference)
Snodgrass, R. E.: *Textbook of Arthropod Anatomy* (#2 in Invertebrates)

IV. Evaluation

Usage reporting must evolve as it has done with journals and standards must be adopted for reporting if open access monographs are to gain traction within the academy. There are initiatives underway to standardize open access usage across platforms and Cornell University Press is participating in a new study being conducted by Knowledge Unlatched along with University of Michigan Press, Liverpool University Press, and Edinburgh University Press. Cornell's NEH Open Access titles will be included with our other OA titles in the usage analysis.

It is imperative that apples-to-apples usage standards are created to ensure the continued viability of OA programs. As demonstrated above, in spite of the inconsistencies, usage data from Cornell Open, Project MUSE, JSTOR, and Amazon continues to show steady growth and confirms that the Press's OA titles remain relevant.

V. Long-Term Impact

For many years, librarians tended to voice the opinion that university press monographs were not widely used. Print circulation data revealed that some books were not circulated at all. The results from Cornell Open, however, demonstrate that OA scholarly monographs are used worldwide on established platforms such as JSTOR and Project MUSE. The methodology for analyzing and selecting impactful out-of-print and deep backlist titles using a combination of subject area specialists, scholars, circulation data, and citations will continue to inform the Press's decisions regarding further titles to open.

Cornell University Press has published 102 OA monographs via the NEH program. As the Press's open access title list grows, it is apparent that a "critical mass" of titles aids in the discoverability of all titles whether promoted as an OA collection or as an OA subject collection.

The NEH Open Book Program has galvanized Press staff and led to the creation of a backlist inventory of everything Cornell University Press has published dating back to 1869. As a direct result of the NEH funding, Cornell Open has extended its reach to frontlist monographs funded in the TOME (Toward an Open Monograph Ecosystem) initiative. Through open and cooperative ventures like the NEH Open Book Program and TOME, university presses are sharing and collaborating for the betterment of the academic publishing environment and those that they serve.

The NEH Digital Humanities Open Book Program grants have created a foundation for open access publishing at Cornell University Press and have increased the Press's capacity for creating e-books from both the recent and deep backlist and out-of-print collections. Previously, alongside frontlist production workflows, we had only managed to create approximately five

first-time e-books of still-in-print backlist titles per month. The NEH OA program has also helped refine our workflows for the creation of web-enhanced PDFs and EPUB files and our recent partnership with CoreSource has expedited the creation and dissemination of digital files at lower cost.

The long-term impact of Cornell Open remains to be seen but the access to classic scholarship is a noble publishing venture that is making ideas public in a way that has never been done before. The next generation of scholars will be accessing these titles and finding a path into the humanities and social sciences. The core values of “openness” and “public engagement” will contribute to the future of the humanities. These classic books have shaped courses and dissertations and will now influence the next generation of scholars.

VI. Products

The 25 newly republished classic Cornell Open titles constitute new products as they are now available in print, PDF, EPUB, and Kindle versions. They have new copyright page information and new cover designs. They reflect the latest in print-on-demand technology. They have been recast and reinvented in the digital age with robust title level metadata, not as static print books with limited reach but as fully discoverable instances of digital scholarship designed to captivate new audiences around the world.

These OA titles also represent brand extensions of Cornell University. Through funding from the NEH and discoverability provided by JSTOR, Project MUSE, and other distribution platforms these classic open access monographs now carry the University’s land grant mission — demonstrating openness, public accessibility, and the dissemination of reliable knowledge — to more than 200 countries.

Founded 150 years ago by the University’s first president, Andrew Dickson White, and benefactor Ezra Cornell, Cornell University Press was the first university press in the nation. It was A. D. White’s vision for the diffusion of new learning and Ezra Cornell’s advocacy for making higher education available to all that gave rise to a university press. The philosophy behind the NEH Humanities Open Book Program and the open access titles it supports embody Ezra’s hope for Cornell University — “where any person can find instruction in any study.” For that, as Cornellians, we express our gratitude.

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High JSTOR usage across 77 OA titles

Cornell University Press OA ebook chapter uses on JSTOR

- Total of 308,043 chapter uses for period shown
- Average of 4,000 chapter uses per title

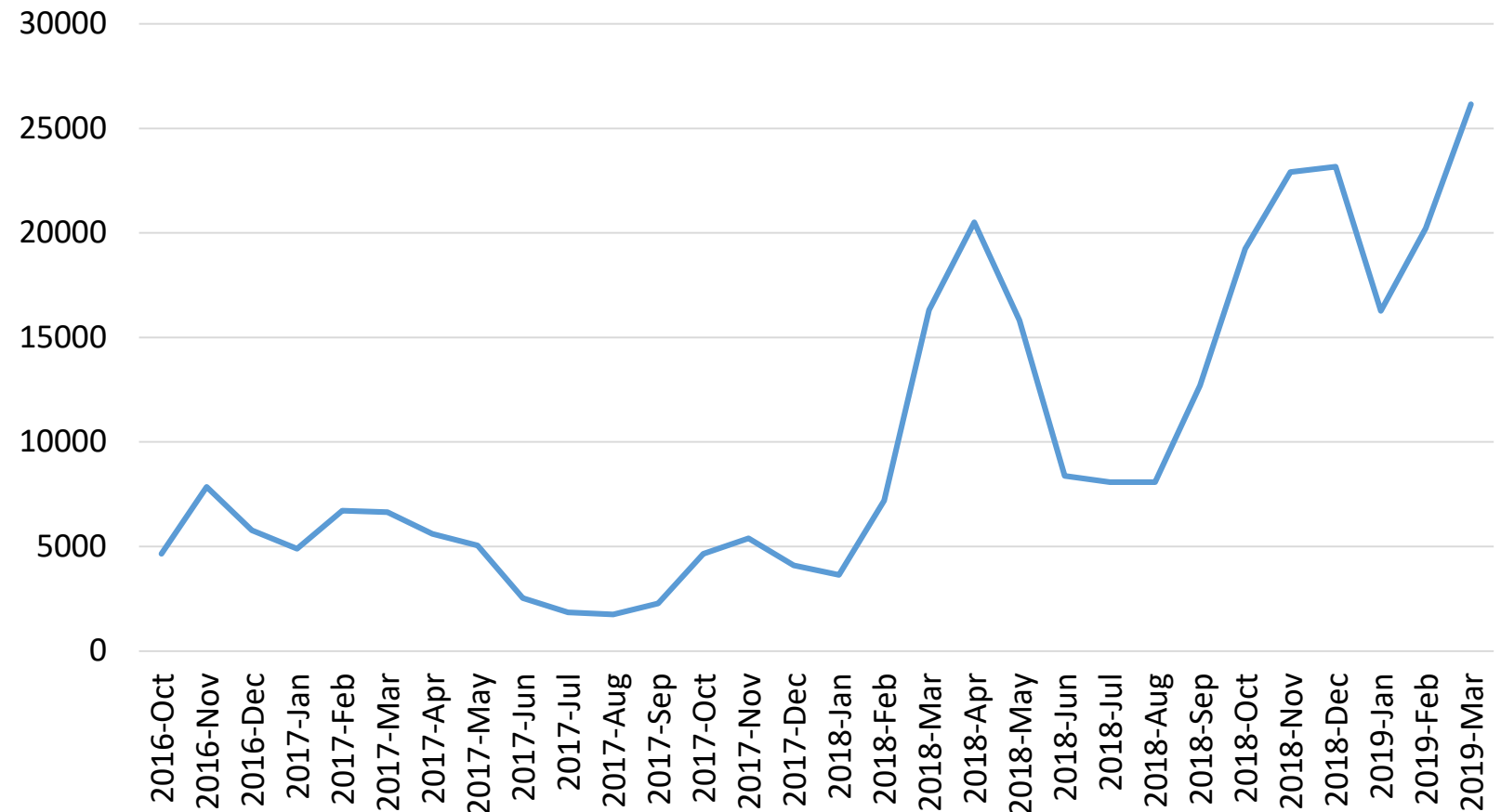


Figure 1

Global usage via JSTOR

- Cornell's OA titles have been used in 208 countries/territories
- 60% of usage associated to one of 7,514 institutions
- 40% of usage from unaffiliated users

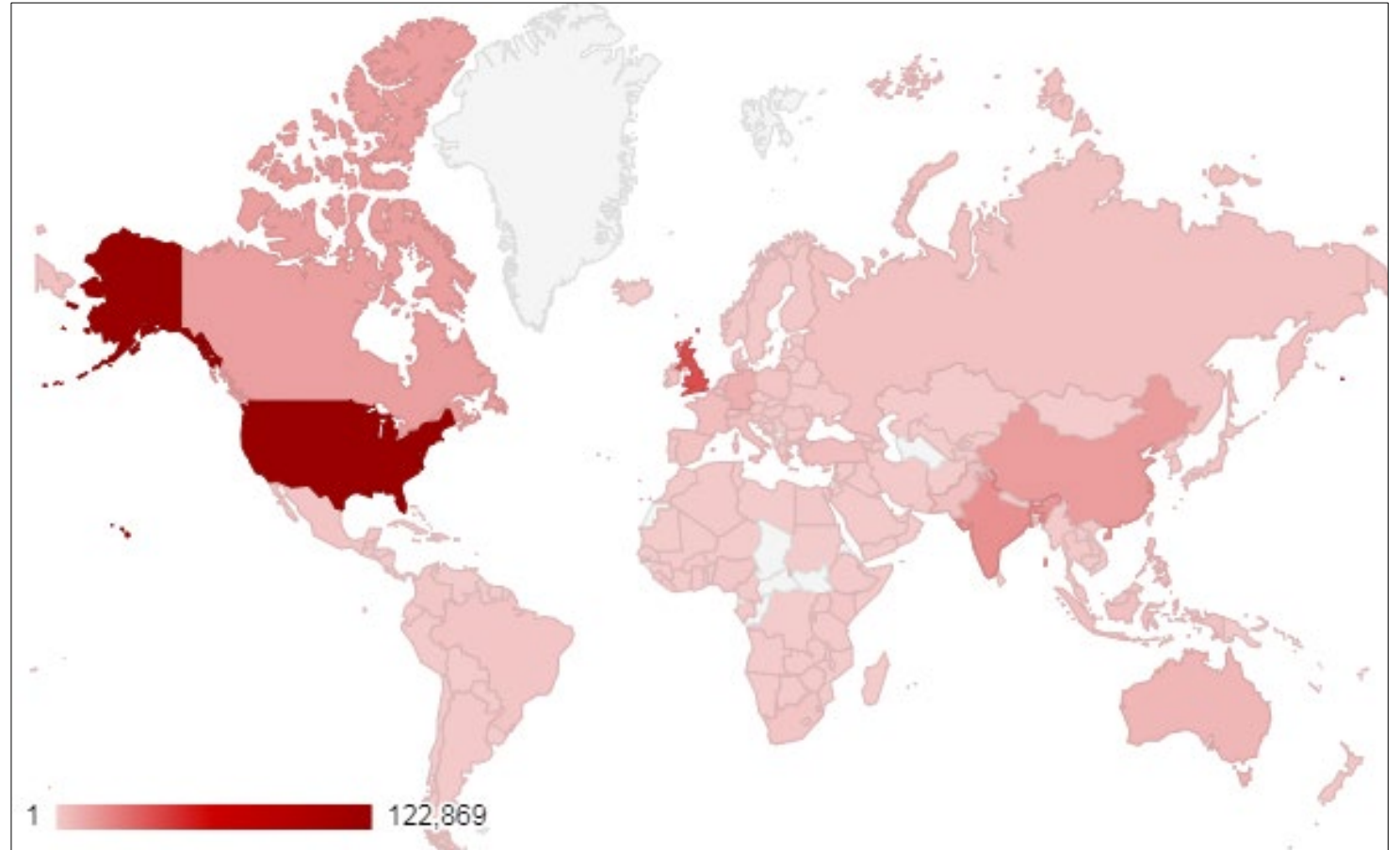


Figure 2

Most-used JSTOR titles

Franz Kafka: The Necessity of Form (14,068 chapter uses)

Bread and Circuses: Theories of Mass Culture as Social Decay (13,326 chapter uses)

Literary Transcendentalism: Style and Vision in the American Renaissance (11,789 chapter uses)

Fictions of Authority: Women Writers and Narrative Voice (10,961 chapter uses)

The Self and Its Pleasures: Bataille, Lacan, and the History of the Decentered Subject (9,011 chapter uses)

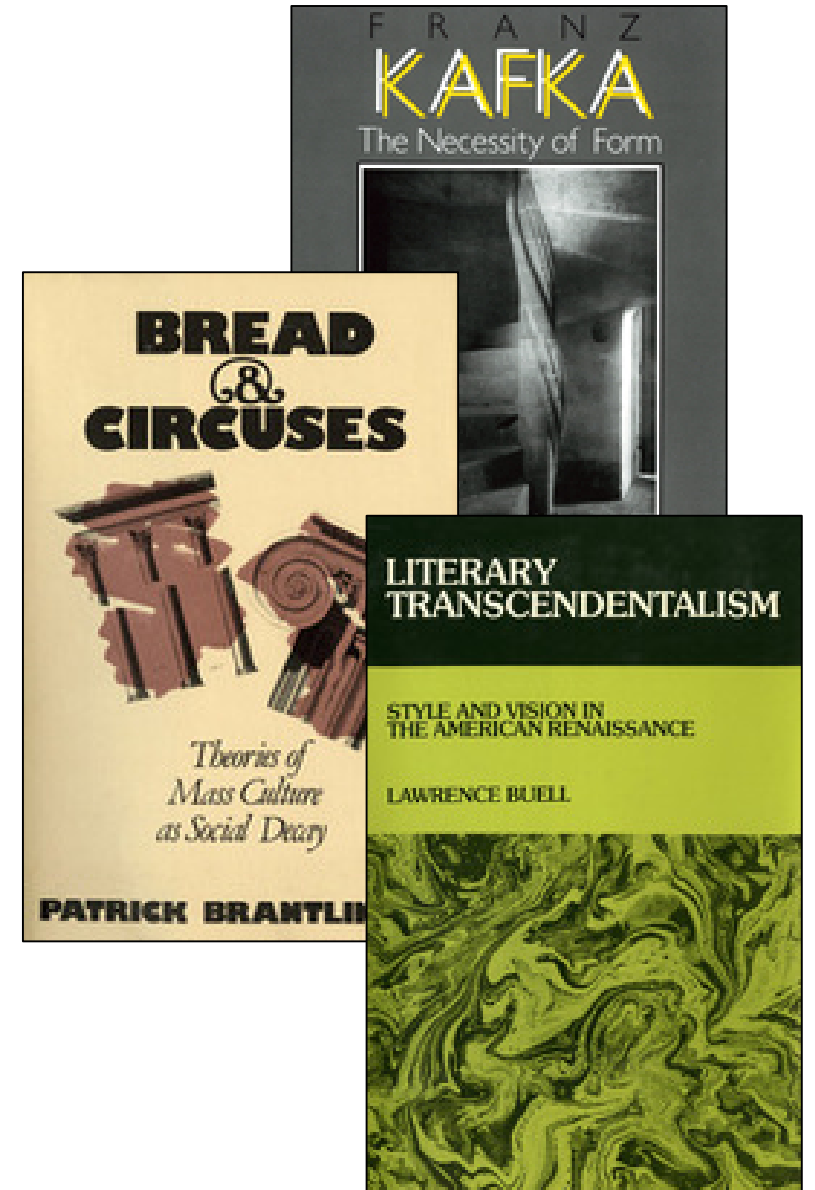


Figure 3